

2013 Needs Assessment for Cullman County

Kim Chaney
Cullman County Courthouse
500 2nd Ave. SW
Cullman, AL 35055
(256)775-4766

Judge Greg Nicholas
Judge Martha Williams
Judge Wells "Rusty" Turner
Sheriff Mike Rainey
Kenneth Walker
Hon. Wilson Blaylock
Kathy Wilson
Brenda Howell
Catherine Denard
Dr. Jan Harris
Billy Coleman
Rhonda Abbott
Rep. Mac Buttram
Sen. Paul Bussman
Rep. Randall Shedd
Debbie Preston

Fran Brown
Megan Wetherbee
Martha Thomas
Javon Daniel
Chris Van Dyke
Laura Mayo
Fran McKoy
Liletta Jenkins
Cindy Moses
Tiki Hubbard
Karen Rowell
Sonya Tinsley
Raydonna Sims
Jan Sexton
Hon. Andria Richter
Chief Kenny Culpepper

Cindy Keller
Lisa Sharpton
Kim Bevis
Dr. Vicki Hawsey
Gail Swafford
Blakely Hopper
Lauren Cain
ADA Jeff Roberts
Misty Wilbourne
Vicki Hubbard
Gina Webb
Tim Thrasher
Christi Meadows

Accomplishments

1. Increasing High School Graduation Rates- Recognizing that we need to decrease the school dropout rate and increase the number of high school graduates, the Cullman Children's Policy Council was able to partner with the Cullman County and Cullman City School Systems to help provide funding for a new School Credit Recovery Program that allows students to catch up on their school credits at night. We use this program in conjunction with the Cullman Juvenile Court Early Warning Truancy Program that quickly identifies students who have unexcused absences and the Parent Accountability Court which is used to address parents who could benefit from help and/or direction to better assist their children. Because of our joint efforts this school year a significant number of students who were about to drop out of school graduated with High School Diplomas.
2. Trauma Prevention Program - Recognizing that a large number of young drivers are being injured, many fatally, in Cullman County; we have continued our partnership with Cullman Regional Medical Center to create a Trauma Prevention Program. This is a safety driving education program designed for young offenders charged with speeding to be ordered to the CRMC Emergency Room to tour the trauma room and meet with peers and surviving family members of injured drivers in an effort to assist them in making better safer driving decisions. This is the second year for the program and it has been extremely successful and has seen tremendous community support.
3. Cullman Drug Court - Illegal drug use has been recognized as the most important issue facing Cullman County children and families because of the far reaching problems it creates for the health, safety and economic security risks to our children. Cullman County is successfully maintaining a Drug Court which is a year long program used as an alternative to incarceration. Currently there are over 100

participants in the program. Not only is this program saving the State of Alabama money it is improving the quality of life for its participants and their families.

4. Cullman County Partnership for Children, Inc - The Cullman Children's Policy Council formed this non-profit corporation to help with grants. It has again successfully served as the funding mechanism for grant applications. This year the Cullman Partnership for Children partnered with the Cullman Savings Bank Foundation and was able to provide a small scholarship to 9 graduating seniors, one from every high school in the county, who overcame some adversity to graduate.

5. Safe Kids Expo - We co-sponsored the Cullman Safe Kids Expo and fishing rodeo with the local Child Advocacy Center. All partners of child safety were invited to set up information booths and participate. Cullman families were provided a free day of fun at a local county park for the children and a forum for all parents to receive a free child ID packet and information on how to protect their children from abuse and make sure their children are safe. We look forward to using this established platform to increase child safety education and awareness in the future.

6. CASA - Following through with past recommendations and building on our success from last year the Cullman CASA program is thriving. Established last year Cullman CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) is a member of the State and National CASA network and boasts a paid volunteer coordinator and now approximately 34 trained court appointed child advocates assisting the Juvenile Court with dependency cases. This program has proven to be very beneficial to dependent children.

7. YAP- Funded through a grant process with DYS the Youth Advocate Program works with family's of young people served by the Juvenile Court. Each child is appointed an advocate to provide in home assistance. They work with each child and family to help resolve any necessary issues. While this program has been relatively new to Cullman County they are making a significant positive impact to the families they serve.

2013 Needs Assessment for Cullman County

First Priority

Need related to children of this county

Increase high school graduation rates. One of the most important things we can do to benefit our children is to help them be successful in school and make sure they graduate high school and/ or learn a trade.

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Early Warning truancy Program is used to quickly identify students who are not going to school. Credit recovery Program has been developed to help students recover credits so they do not drop out of school. Parental Accountability Court is used by the Juvenile court to help parents make sure they know how to help their children be successful in school.	More funding for at risk students. Program to address the problems associated with young school aged single mothers who normally drop out of school. An alternative vocational track that could be used instead of high school diploma used to engage those who are not academically inclined to give them motivation to stay in school and learn a marketable trade.

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Meet with the local Chamber of Commerce or company to see what training a successful employee would need in an effort to match the training to the available local job market.
2. Develop public service announcements to advertise the advantages of completing high school such as financial security and driver's license.

2013 Needs Assessment for Cullman County

Second Priority

Need related to children of this county

To promote health and Safety we want to Increase Safety Education for Children

Develop and promote child safety issues involving:

1. Water safety
2. Bicycle safety
3. Distracted driving (texting)
4. Fire Safety
5. Dangers of Tobacco

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Cullman Park and Recreation offers child swimming lessons Some fire departments offer fire safety programs A few local insurance companies offer materials on bike safety	Identify or develop water survival safety programs that could be offered to younger children Uniform County wide fire safety programs Actual bicycle riding safety programs that could be offered to the public Public service announcements that detail the dangers of texting or distracted driving

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

Use the annual Safe Kids Expo to promote all child safety programs

Partner with Park and Rec or Cullman Regional Hospital to develop water safety class

Partner with insurance companies to sponsor bicycle safety programs

2013 Needs Assessment for Cullman County

Third Priority

Need related to children of this county

The manufacture, distribution and use of illegal drugs in Cullman County threaten the health, safety, education and economic security of children.

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Active enforcement of drug laws by drug task force made of all law enforcement agencies in Cullman County. Implementation of a post-conviction Drug Court for those arrested which require mandated drug treatment. We currently have approximately 100 participants Use of pre-trial screening such as random drug screens and attendance to AA or NA as a condition of bond for earlier intervention to facilitate settlements and better results of pending drug cases. Community drug education programs for children and adults. In school drug education and intervention programs	Formal education of local physicians and medical providers to help reduce abuse of prescribed controlled substances. Coordinated review or better monitoring of those seeking multiple prescriptions in the regional medical communities. Uniform accessible and regional rehabilitation centers offering detox, short term, long term and half way house services for drug offenders. Ideally the regional rehabs would also offer live skills, educational and/or vocational training.

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Make ephedra and pseudoephedrine, the main ingredients of methamphetamine a controlled substance which requires a prescription. This has been used successfully by other states to reduce the manufacturing of meth.